

ROUTINE

ACTION

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RELEASED IN PART

B6, B1, 1.4

PGOVU

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ACTION: VE (02)

INFO: DAND (02) RJ (01) MM (01) JPL (01) JRH (01) ARA (01) PPC (01)
OAS (01) PPA (01) EPSC (04) DEPC (01) EBS (01) CO (02)
EC (01) PE (01) DCAR (01) BEP (01) TBCY (01) DR (02)

22/1412Z A2 R0 (TOTAL COPIES: 027)

ACTION ARA-00

INFO LOG-00 ACDA-00 ACDE-00 AID-00 ACO-00 CEA-01 CTME-00
DODE-00 DOEE-00 SRPP-00 DS-00 EB-00 EXIM-01 E-00
FRB-00 H-01 TEOE-00 INR-00 ITC-01 LAB-01 L-00
ADS-00 NSAE-00 NSCE-00 ONB-01 OPIC-01 PA-00 PM-00
PRS-00 P-00 SP-00 SSO-00 STR-00 TRSE-00 T-00
FMP-00 PMB-00 DSCC-00 DRI-04 G-00 FBIC-01 NFAT-00
SAS-00 /023W

R 212043Z JUL 98
FM AMEMBASSY CARACAS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1196
INFO AMEMBASSY BOGOTA
AMEMBASSY QUITO
AMEMBASSY LIMA
AMEMBASSY GEDRGE
AMEMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN
AMEMBASSY BRASLIA
USCINCSO MIAMI FL
CIA WASHDC
DIA WASHDC
USIA WASHDC 1656
USDOC WASHDC 2963

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE
CLASSIFIED BY DEPT. OF STATE, M. GRAFELD, DAS, A/GIS, ACTING
REVIEW AUTHORITY: ADOLPH H EISNER
CLASSIFICATION: CONFIDENTIAL REASON: 1.4
DECLASSIFY AFTER: 20 JUL 2023
DATE/CASE ID: 14 JUN 2010 200503654

CONFIDENTIAL CARACAS 002214

E.D. 12958: DECL: 4/17/08
TAGS: PREL, PGOV, ECON, EFIM, VE

SUBJECT: WHATEVER IT TAKES TO WIN: A VENEZUELAN CAMPAIGN NOTEBOOK,
ISSUE 8 (JUNE 8-JULY 6)

CLASSIFIED BY [REDACTED] REASON: B6
1.5 (0).

WELCOME TO OUR CAMPAIGN NOTEBOOK

1. (U) THIS IS THE EIGHTH IN A BIWEEKLY SERIES OF REPORTS ON
VENEZUELA'S 1998 ELECTIONS (THIS REPORT COVERS A FOUR WEEK PERIOD).
DIVIDED INTO THREE SECTIONS--CAMPAIGN NEWS TICKER, VIGNETTES, AND
HIGH-FLYERS AND BOTTOM-FEEDERS--WE HOPE TO USE THIS NOTEBOOK TO
BRING YOU BREAKING NEWS, RUMORS AND INSIDER Gossip, AND PROFILES OF
THE MANY POLITICAL HANDLERS, CAMPAIGN WORKERS, AND POLITICIANS WHO
WILL MAKE THIS ELECTION HAPPEN. THIS NOTEBOOK IS DESIGNED TO
COMPLEMENT OUR REGULAR POLITICAL REPORTING ON THE ELECTIONS,
PROVIDING YOU A GLIMPSE OF THE "OFF CAMERA" POLITICS WHICH WILL NOT
APPEAR ELSEWHERE.

CAMPAIGN NEWS TICKER

-- IRENE'S PARTY, CALLED IRENE, WAS APPROVED JULY 1 BY THE
NATIONAL ELECTORAL COUNCIL AS A "NATIONAL PARTY," ALLOWING THAT
PARTY TO REGISTER ITS CANDIDATE DURING THE WEEK OF JULY 20-24.

-- IRENE, AFTER FIRING DAVID GARTH AS A POLITICAL ADVISOR, HIRED
BOB SQUIRE. [REDACTED]

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-- IRENE ALSO PUSHED HER [REDACTED] POLITICAL
COLLABORATOR ENRIQUE MENBOZA TO THE SIDELINES, DRIVING ON EZEQUIEL
ZAMORA AS HER NEW CAMPAIGN MANAGER. [REDACTED]

-- IRENE ALSO SOUGHT TO PUT HER FINANCIAL HOUSE IN ORDER. SHE
HAS HIRED JOSE RAMON MEDINA, A COPEI DEPUTY, TO MANAGE HER CAMPAIGN
FINANCES, MOVING FRANCISCO ARROCHA OUT OF THIS JOB. ARROCHA WILL
MANAGE THE FUND SET UP TO RECEIVE AND DISBURSE CAMPAIGN MONIES.

-- CLAUDIO FERNIN PROHIBITED REGIONAL OFFICIALS AND CANDIDATES OF
HIS PARTY, RENOVACION, FROM MAKING ELECTORAL PACTS WITH THE
DEMOCRATIC ACTION PARTY (AD) OR THE SOCIAL CHRISTIAN PARTY (COPEI).
FERNIN SAID HIS PARTY IS COMMITTED TO BREAKING WITH TRADITIONAL
PARTIES AND THEIR "NARROW, CLIENTELISTIC, AUTHORITARIAN
LEADERSHIP," AND MUST REMAIN INDEPENDENT OF THESE PARTIES IF IT IS
TO OFFER AN ALTERNATIVE FOR "PEACEFUL, DEMOCRATIC CHANGE."

-- HENRIQUE SALAS ROMER PREDICTED THAT HE WOULD BE IN SECOND PLACE
IN THE POLLS IN "A MATTER OF WEEKS." DURING A TRIP TO SPAIN, SALAS
ROMER SAID HE HAS ESTABLISHED A CAMPAIGN ORGANIZATION OF "50,000
VOLUNTEERS" WHICH HAS INCORPORATED "CIVIL SOCIETY." [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] HE HAS SET UP 9,000
CAMPAIGN COMMITTEES AROUND THE COUNTRY. HE SAID HE IS SPENDING HIS

MONEY ON ESTABLISHING A GRASSROOTS NETWORK TO MOBILIZE AND PROTECT
HIS VOTE.

-- RETIRED GENERAL MULLER ROJAS, CURRENTLY A SENATOR FOR THE
HOMELAND FOR ALL PARTY (PPT), WAS CHOSEN AS CHIEF CAMPAIGN MANAGER
BY HUGO CHAVEZ. THE MOVEMENT TOWARDS SOCIALISM PARTY'S (MAS)
MEMBER OF THE CAMPAIGN TEAM IS FREDDY DIAZ, WHILE THE FIFTH
REPUBLIC MOVEMENT IS REPRESENTED BY COLONEL WILLIAM BAVILA.

-- CONVERGENCIA'S NATIONAL CONVENTION DECIDED AGAINST ANNOUNCING
A PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE, ALTHOUGH FEDERAL DISTRICT GOVERNOR ABDON
VIVAS HAD OFFERED HIMSELF TO THE PARTY. THE PARTY WAS SPLIT
BETWEEN GOING WITH ITS OWN CANDIDATE-- [REDACTED]--OR
GIVING ITS SUPPORT TO ANOTHER PARTY'S CANDIDATE. PARTY MEMBERS
PREFERRED THE LATER. [REDACTED]

CONVERGENCIA BOSS JUAN JOSE
CALDERA TRIED TO COVER UP THIS PROBLEM BY ANNOUNCING THAT
CONVERGENCIA WOULD RESERVE ITS ENDORSEMENT FOR A LATER DATE. IN
THE MEANTIME, HE SAID, CONVERGENCIA WOULD ACT AS THE CATALYST "FOR
A GREAT NATIONAL ACCORD" WHICH WILL ESTABLISH A POLICY OF CONSENSUS
TO DEAL WITH VENEZUELA'S ECONOMIC CRISIS.

VIGNETTES

GOING TO SEE THE CAUDILLO

2. (C) FORMER U.S. AMBASSADOR TO VENEZUELA MIKE SKOL WAS IN TOWN
JUNE 10-12 FOR AN ANTI-CORRUPTION SEMINAR SPONSORED BY THE
PRESIDENTIAL COMMISSION FOR STATE REFORM (COPRE). HE TOOK
ADVANTAGE OF HIS PRESENCE TO ASK FOR A CALL ON AD PRESIDENTIAL
CANDIDATE AND POLITICAL CAUDILLO EXTRAORDINARIO LUIS RIFARO. HE
WANTED AMBASSADOR SKOL TO MAKE HIS ANTI-CORRUPTION PITCH, AND NOTE
THE IMPORTANCE OF STRONG, EFFECTIVE ANTI-CORRUPTION MEASURES TO
PROMOTING FOREIGN INVESTMENT AND POPULAR CONFIDENCE IN GOVERNMENT.

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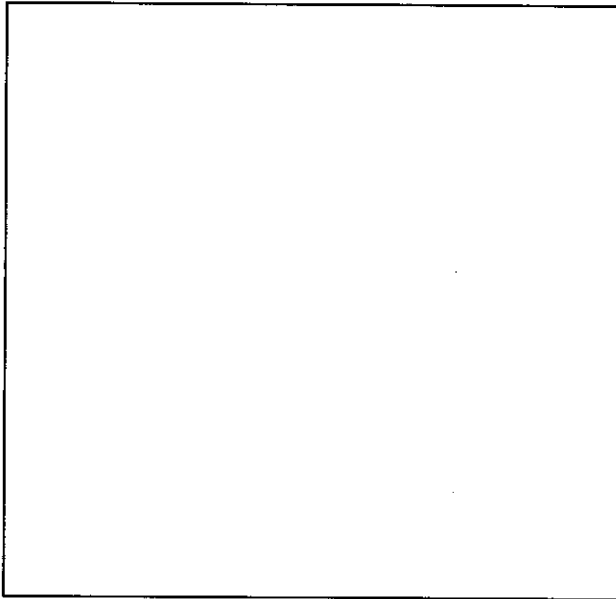
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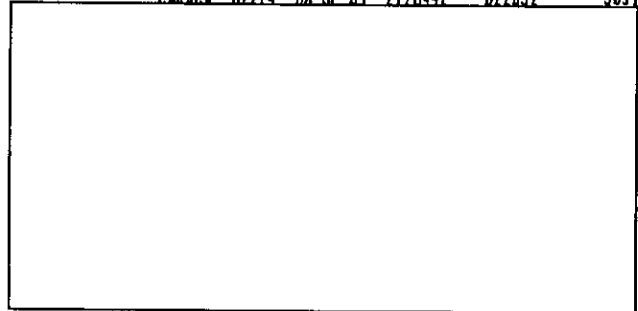
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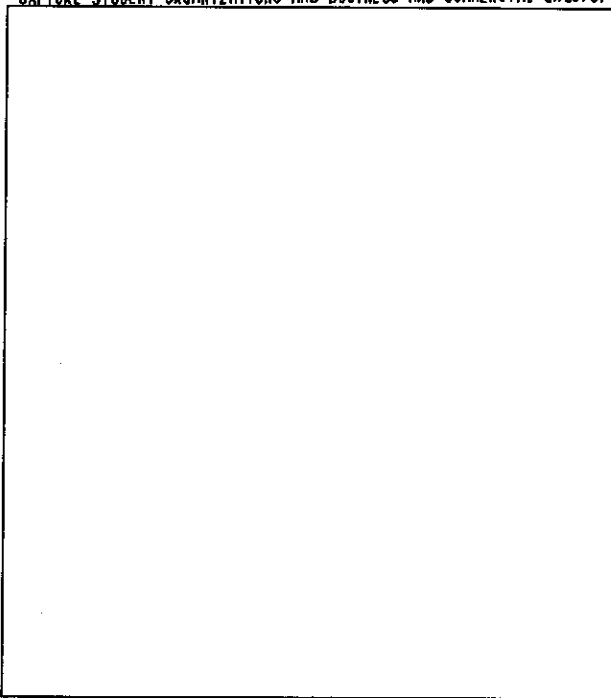


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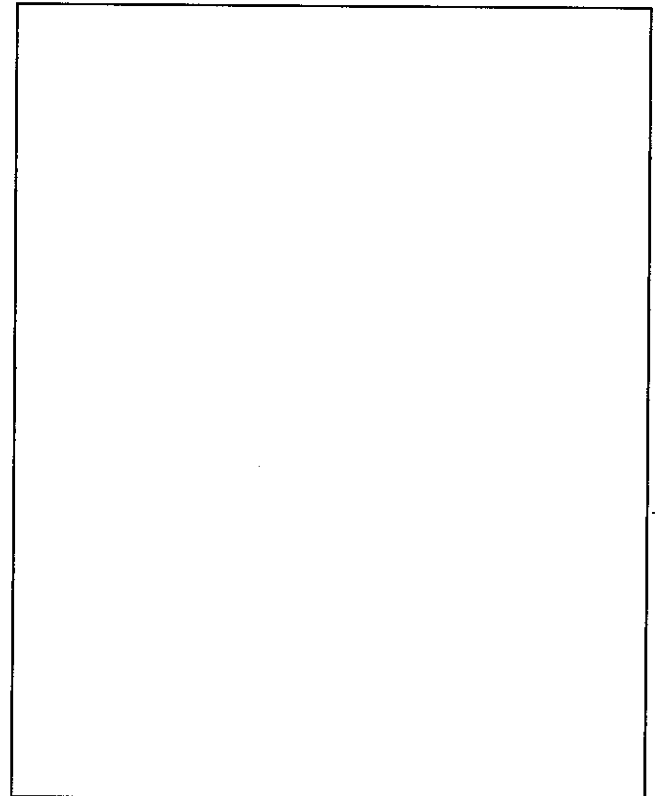


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6. (C) AFTER GREETING ALFARO, THE "CAUDILLO" (THIS IS WHAT HIS CLOSEST AIDES CALL HIM...HONEST) DECLARED WITH A CONFIDENCE SURPRISING FOR A CANDIDATE WHO AT THE TIME SAT AT 3 PERCENT IN THE POLLS, "I AM GOING TO WIN THIS ELECTION." HE THEN LAID OUT HIS PLAN FOR VICTORY, WHICH INCLUDED WINNING SUPPORT SOCIAL SECTOR BY SOCIAL SECTOR, BEGINNING WITH AD STRONGHOLDS IN THE TRADE UNION MOVEMENT AND PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS, AND THEN MOVING OUT TO CAPTURE STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS AND BUSINESS AND COMMERCIAL GROUPS.



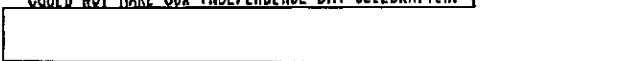
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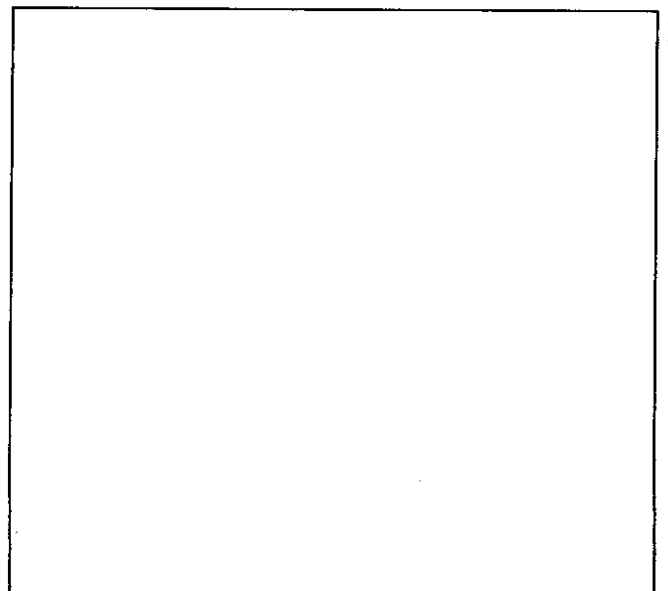
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ALFARO'S JULY FOURTH MESSAGE

9. (C) ALFARO WAS IN MONAGAS STATE CAMPAIGNING ON JULY 3-4 AND COULD NOT MAKE OUR INDEPENDENCE DAY CELEBRATION.



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